

AUDIO APPARATUS**5 Background of the Invention**

This invention relates to audio apparatus, and in particular audio apparatus for radiating an ultrasonic pressure wave with a modulated audio signal.

Audio spotlighting, using a parametric audio system, provides a means for
 10 projecting highly directional beams of audible sound. This technology employs the non-linearity of a compressible material (such as air) to create audible by-products from inaudible ultrasound. This technique exploits an acoustic phenomenon called self-demodulation where low frequency audio beams of high directivity are generated from a high amplitude ultrasonic beam that has
 15 been modulated with an audio signal. Self-demodulation generates new frequencies in the received sound spectra based on the envelope frequency (i.e. the required audio signal) in a process akin to AM demodulation. Thus this technique provides a beam of audio sound with the focused directional properties of the original ultrasonic carrier beam, allowing distant targeting of
 20 specific listeners. This technique can produce predictable and controllable levels of audio sound and, despite the relatively weak effect of self-demodulation, is capable of generating substantial sound amplitudes due to the narrow spatial distribution of the acoustic energy.

25 The transmitted modulated ultrasonic wave can be considered as a collimated primary wave consisting of an amplitude modulated wave of pressure where the primary pressure wave is defined by

$$1) \quad p_1 = P_1 E(t) \sin(\omega_c t)$$

where P_1 is the amplitude of the primary beam pressure, ω_c is the carrier frequency and $E(t)$ is the modulation envelope. For an amplitude modulated signal $E(t)$ is equal to $(1 + mg(t))$ where m is the modulation depth and $g(t)$ is the audio signal.

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As a result of p_1 interacting with the air the modulated audio signal demodulates creating an audible secondary pressure wave p_2 given by

$$10 \quad 2) \quad p_2(t) = \frac{\beta P_1^2 A}{16\pi\rho_0 c_0^4 z \alpha} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial t^2} E^2(\tau)$$

where β is the coefficient of nonlinearity ($\beta_{\text{air}} = 1.2$), ρ_0 is the ambient density of the medium, c_0 is the small signal wave propagation speed, A is the beam's cross-sectional area, z is the axial distance, α is the absorption coefficient of the medium. So, for example, where $c=343$ m/s, $\rho_0=1.2\text{kg/m}^3$, $\alpha = 0.6$, and $A=5\times 10\text{m}^{-3}$, a 140dB ultrasound wave modulated with a 1kHz signal would produce about 71dB of audible sound at 1m.

The power of the resultant audio signal is proportional to the second derivative of the square of the modulation envelope. As a result significant coloration (i.e. a shift of signal power with respect to frequency) and distortion are introduced onto the demodulated audio signal as a result of the interaction of the ultrasonic wave with the non-linear medium. The coloration of the signal results in the low frequency audio components being suppressed by approximately 12dB/octave; this is represented by the second derivative term of the modulation envelope. The distortion of the signal is represented by the square of the modulation envelope.

Processing the audio signal prior to modulation can minimise the effects of coloration and distortion that result from the interaction of the ultrasonic wave

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with the non-linear medium. The processing typically comprises a double integration filter to compensate for coloration of the audio signal and a square root operation to compensate for the distortion of the audio signal.

- 5 However, for the self-demodulation to occur high ultrasonic sound pressure levels are required. To generate these high pressure levels it is necessary to generate the ultrasonic pressure levels at or close to the resonant frequency of the transmitting transducer. Correspondingly the frequency response of the transducer can vary dramatically at this frequency. The variable transducer
- 10 frequency response can significantly affect the quality of the demodulated audio pressure wave.

Figure 1, plot A shows the frequency spectrum of a white noise input signal constrained between 300 and 4000 Hz prior to modulation with an ultrasonic carrier signal. An example of the effects of self-demodulation and transducer conversion upon the input signal, using a typical transducer having a measured frequency response shown in figure 2, is shown in figure 1, plot B.

- 20 The frequency response of a transducer can be flattened at the resonant frequency. However this requires considerable damping to be added to the transducer, and a corresponding drop in ultrasonic pressure level. This in turn would require a transducer with a large radiating surface area, which is not suitable for small devices, for example a mobile communication device and in particular a radiotelephone.

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Summary of the Invention

- In accordance with an aspect of the present invention there is provided audio apparatus comprising a modulator for modulating a first ultrasonic signal with an audio signal to provide a second ultrasonic signal; a transducer for
- 30 converting the second ultrasonic signal into an ultrasonic pressure wave for

transmission into a non-linear medium to allow demodulation of the ultrasonic pressure wave and thereby generate an audio pressure wave representative of the audio signal; processing means for modifying the audio signal to compensate for the demodulating properties of the non-linear medium; and
 5 means for modifying the audio signal to compensate for the conversion characteristics of the transducer.

This provides the advantage of enabling the effects of the demodulation process and the transducer conversion characteristics on the audio signal to be minimised. This can allow the size of the transducer to be reduced while retaining the performance of the transducer.

Typically the means for modifying the audio signal to compensate for the conversion characteristics of a transducer is a transducer response filter.

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Most preferably the processing means comprises a double integration filter and a square root operator. As the operator processes the audio signal non-linearly the characteristics of the second filter are preferably derived empirically by tone adjustment for the required frequency range of the audio
 20 signal.

The invention will now be described, by way of one example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

25 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

Figure 1, plot A shows the frequency spectrum of a test audio input signal to an audio apparatus according to one embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 1, plot B shows the frequency spectrum of figure 1, plot A after self-demodulation without correction;

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Figure 5, plot A shows the frequency spectrum of the test audio signal output after self-demodulation with correction for self-demodulation;

Detailed Description of the Invention

Figure 3 shows a radiotelephone 1 with audio apparatus 2, a speech decoder 3, a channel decoder 4, a receiver 5 and an antenna 6. In operation the receiver 5 receives a speech encoded digital signal 20 from a base station (not shown) via antenna 6. The receiver 5 demodulates the received digital signal 20 and passes the demodulated signal 21 to channel decoder 4 which corrects for errors that may have occurred during the transmission process by using error protection bits encoded within the received signal. The receiver 5 typically samples the received signal 20 at 8 kHz. The decoded digital signal 22 is provided to speech decoder 3 which decodes the speech and passes the digital decoded signal 23 to audio apparatus 2 to generate an acoustic representation of the received speech signal as described in detail below. The audio apparatus 2 may be mounted within the radiotelephone 1. Typically

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square root operation only has to work on positive values, thereby avoiding complex filtering.

The DC shifted signal 26 is provided to up-sampler 10. The up-sampler 10 re-samples the 8 kHz signal at typically 120 kHz. The purpose of up-sampler 10 is to increase the frequency range of the signal in preparation for the square rooting of the signal. A consequence of square rooting the received signal is the creation of an infinite series of harmonics. For distortion to be eliminated all these harmonics must be reproduced. Therefore, to ensure harmonics above 4 kHz are reproduced the signal is re-sampled at a higher frequency. Sample rates other than 120 kHz may be used dependant on the operating frequencies of the ultrasonic transducer. The re-sampled signal 27 is provided to the square root operator 11.

The square rooting operator 11 compensates for the effects of distortion that occur during the self-demodulation process, and is non-linear in nature.

The square root operator 11 is typically performed by means of a look up table, as is well known to a person skilled in the art.

The square rooted signal 28 is provided to modulator 12 for modulation with an ultrasonic signal 29 from ultrasonic signal source 13. To minimise the risk of harm to humans or animals the ultrasonic frequency should be higher than approximately 40kHz. Due to increased signal absorption by the air at higher frequencies the upper highest feasible frequency limit is typically of the order of 200kHz.

The digital modulated ultrasonic signal 30 is provided to digital to analogue converter 14 for converting the digital signal 30 to a representative analogue signal. The analogue modulated ultrasonic signal 31 is provided to ultrasonic

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Typically the transducer response filter characteristics are determined during the manufacture of the audio device. However, it is possible for the

characteristics of the transducer response filter to be determined dynamically, for example while during use of the audio device.

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5 Figure 5, plot A shows the transducer conversion effect upon the input signal shown in figure 1, plot A. Figure 5, plot B shows the corrected spectrum using a transducer response filter 8 empirically derived using figure 5, plot A for determining the effect of the transducer conversion. For different frequency and modulation depths the square root non-linear operator 11 will vary the effects of the transducer conversion and accordingly different frequency and
10 modulation depths will require the transducer response filter 8 to be modified empirically as described above.

The transducer response filter 8 is typically a simple recursive filter.

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15 The present invention may include any novel feature or combination of features disclosed herein either explicitly or implicitly or any generalisation thereof irrespective of whether or not it relates to the presently claimed invention or mitigates any or all of the problems addressed. In view of the foregoing description it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that various
20 modifications may be made within the scope of the invention. The applicant hereby gives notice that new claims may be formulated to such features during prosecution of this application or of any such further application derived therefrom. For example, it will be appreciated that an analogue audio signal can be processed and modulated with an ultrasonic carrier signal, also that
25 the pre-processing filters and/or operator can be used to process the audio signal after modulation of the audio signal.

What is claimed is:-